

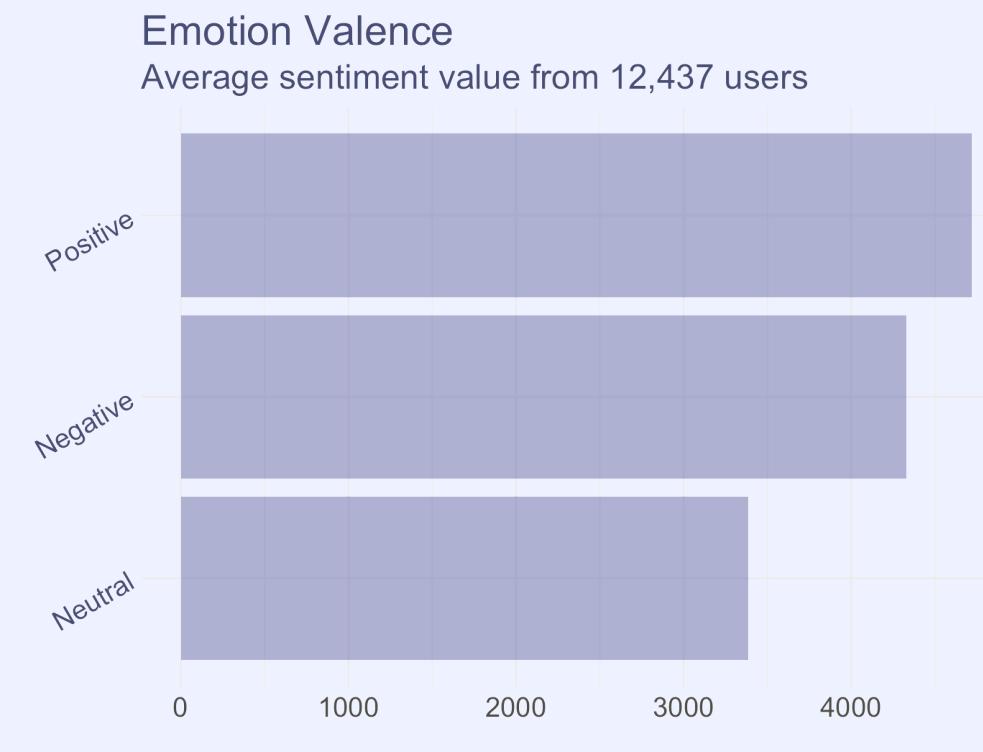
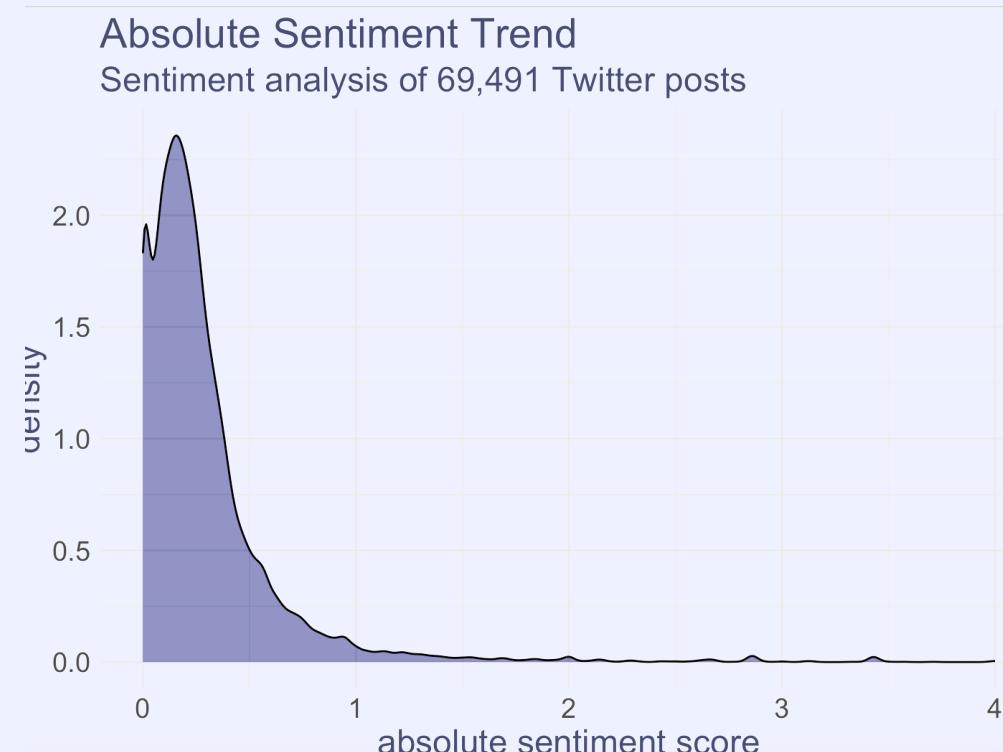
01 BACKGROUND

PEOPLE SEEM TO HAVE THEIR UNIQUE "STYLES" IN THE CONTENT THEY CHOOSE TO SHARE ONLINE

Successful media provide an abundance of colorful experiences from multiple modalities. A pivotal component of experience is feeling, which later crystallizes into a powerful driver of human behaviors --- **emotion**.

According to emerging social psychology research on motivation and personality, **people are motivated to verify the previous traits they publicly displayed before**. Consolidating a desirable consistent facade of oneself is a pleasurable process. Thus, it's likely that this motivation will influence how people showcase themselves online, engendering diverse user needs on social media.

Curious about user's desire of expressing internal state, I did sentiment analysis on 69,941 Twitter posts from 12,437 users. I calculated the mean emotional score of each user's post using R. From exploratory data analysis, I discovered that the **over 8,500 of users' post contents are emotionally charged**, with an average sentiment value greater than 0.05 (i.e. positive) or smaller than -0.05 (i.e. negative). From these preliminary research, I hypothesize that people might willing to share momentary status and portray how they feel on social media.



Users engage in social media either **actively or passively**. Active users tend to interact with others preemptively, sharing their status to their connections. Passive users prefer to silently observe what's going on around. Do these differing engagement styles make users present their digital personas in unique ways?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: How does users with different engagement styles establish and maintain their digital persona on social media?

RQ2: What factors influence users willingness to display an authentic and consistent digital persona on social media?

RQ3: How do users tailor the content related to self-image they share on social media?

More or less, people are predisposed to present themselves deliberately online. This research intends to explore the ways in which people project their real-world self-image onto social media platforms. What influences their initiatives to curate their online images? What should designers do to create a comfortable sharing space for users with different engagement styles?



Active working memory

Retrieve meaningful episodic memory from long-term memory for sharing

Scarce attentional resource

Interact casually, possibly dividing attention to other things while posting



High self-awareness

Self-concept is salient due to the presence of online others. Self-promotion and verification becomes pivotal motivations

02 RESEARCH PROCESS



03 USER PERSONA

DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF BUILDING DIGITAL PERSONALITY ONLINE



"If others can't perceive the real me online accurately, my offline interaction will be harmed!"

Stella Gallagher

👤 24, female

🏡 Bilingual Undergraduate in U.S.

📷 Uses Instagram and Twitter

📸 2D designer & Visual artist

Stella, a 24-year-old artist and avid social media user, leverages online platforms to stay connected with friends. She consistently records and shares snippets of her creative endeavors and personal experiences. Despite frequent sharing, Stella chooses not to expose feelings too excessively under digital spotlight.

USER NEEDS

- ◆ Display different aspects of herself as she encounters different people online.
- ◆ Present herself as a skillful and sentimental photographer to new friends on social media.
- ◆ Respond promptly to his friends' posts, and convey his thoughts with swiftness, clarity, and vividness.

FRUSTRATION

- ◆ Existing apps lack the capability to switch between different facets of herself for varying audiences.
- ◆ It is time-consuming to create unique and appealing posts that capture her ideal ways of being.
- ◆ Others might not perceive her real personality online, in turn hampering the quality of offline interactions.



"Sharing online simply puts too many elements there for me to consider..."

Axl Kilpatrick

👤 20, Male

🏡 Freshmen at Boston University

📷 Uses Instagram and WeChat

💻 Major in Data Science

Axl scrolls social media all the time, but he rarely posts and interacts publicly. He only chats with his good friends privately. Although he is busy, he curates his profile carefully, hoping to convey himself in an easygoing, and approachable manner. In general, Axl cherishes meaningful relationships over his own public visibility.

USER NEEDS

- ◆ Curate his preferred self-image on his profile with minimal posting, seeking validation from others.
- ◆ Adjust the depth of communication based on the level of intimacy with the person involved.
- ◆ Gaining a deeper understanding of close friends by interpreting their posts and unique profiles.

FRUSTRATION

- ◆ Profile features that enable self-expression are limited in scope and ambiguous in terms of accuracy.
- ◆ Current social media don't afford different depth of communication.
- ◆ Commenting and sharing posts is complicated, and there isn't a shortcut for these actions.

Active users like Stella sometimes express their authentic selves directly through interactions, such as posting, texting, and commenting.

Passive users like Axl quietly scroll over posts, but they are still eager to display a well-curated self-image to others through indirect ways.



Art and Design student - Axl Kil

Stella is a photography, studying graphic design at University of Michigan. Everyday she takes photos to capture the trivial beauties in life and dump them immediately on Instagram. She hopes through these posts others can know her better so that she can find like-minded friends who share her hobbies. More importantly, she uses these posts to record the memorable events, finding fascination in revisiting the diverse stages of her personal growth.

04 USER JOURNEY MAP

THE GROWTH OF DIGITAL PERSONALITY

	1 01 CREATE AND POLISH THE PROFILE	2 02 GROUP TARGET AUDIENCE	3 03 SHARE MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES	4 04 INTERACT WITH OTHER USERS	5 05 REINFORCE DIGITAL PERSONA
ACTION	Design the overall theme or style of the profile, such as a consistent color scheme, aesthetic, or tone that reflects the user's personality Share personal details selectively, such as the user's hometown, current location, or educational background	Sort out the group of friends to whom the user is willing to share a post Curtail the content in a post such that they share a proper amount of personal information to the selected audience.	Record memorable moments in life and share in-time emotions and experiences immediately in posts Create content that contains elements of both user's ideal self and authentic self	Infer other users' personality traits according to their reactions and comments Respond to others with supplementary information, such as liking, hearting, or emojis, to enhance the accuracy of self-image	Develop the routine of consistently sharing content across different aspects. Dimensions of consistency includes topics, emotions, traits, target audiences, content diversity, and priority of real-time sharing
EXPECTATION	Convey a desirable impression to related others in an attempt to maintain existing relationships Use visual elements to reflect a unique aspect of oneself conveniently and vividly	Adapt the range of audiences that the post can reach with adequate flexibility Share different aspects of personal information with varying degrees of detail	Frequent, casual, informal sharing actions with adequate immediacy Features that allow for emotional expression, capturing the essence of their experiences and status	Others can grasp the essence of user's self-identity in interaction Extend social bonds appropriately and obtain validation and compliments from others	Inform visitors the user's real-world, authentic identity by showcasing a stream of posts on their profile Immerse into memorable experience in the past and reflect on growth by creating a vivid personal story in mind
OPPORTUNITY	Beyond text information, provide users customizable visual elements to display their status and identity	Enable users to create and save sharing templates, facilitating easy retrieval and usage whenever users wish to share.	Study sharing patterns to weave individual posts into a coherent storyline, promoting the extension and maintenance of relationships	Visualize user's post storyline into avatars, icons, summaries, or interactive plots, allowing them to explore, retrospect, and express	Allow users to create multiple digital personas to meet their self-presentation needs in the face of different audience



"The use of emojis adds a relatable aspect to the posts! It's where the first impression derives from."



"I value close connections; I prioritize in-depth socialization over building a large network."



"Sharing can get a bit complicated, too many elements there for me to consider, so I just quit."



"Interacting too much online might cause others to have a less accurate impression of me ..."



"I always craft informal, arbitrary text on posts to connect with others in a casual, approachable manner."